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Only since 1930 have some automobile highways been built, and the Communist regime, in cooperation with Soviet Russia, are building the first Inner Asiatic railway, linking Alma-Ata with Lan-chou. This railway will, without doubt, speed up the Sinification of the frontier areas, and above all add industrialization to agriculture and pastoral nomadism.

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As far as Chinhai was concerned, the Western Mongols (the Oirats) were also locally ruled by dzasaks, the leaders of banners. Unlike the banners of Inner and Outer Mongolia and Sinkiang, however, they did not combine banners to form leagues or to elect one of their tribal leaders as the captain-general of the league. The Chinese governor- with his seat in Sining - functioned as captain-general. In regard to the nomadic Tibetans, the Chinese government appointed chieftains as dzasak-lamas and gave them the rights and the privileges which this office involves. The sedentary Tibetans were ruled by t'u-ssus, also appointees of the Peking government. By and large, this governmental pattern existed until the Communists came into power.

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The form of governing non-Chinese peoples changed in the course of time in various ways, but one thing never changed: the aim of the Peking government to rule, to suppress, to exploit, and to sinify them.

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Unlike the eighteen provinces in China proper, the province of Sinkiang (after 1884) and the Eastern Three Provinces, (after 1907) the areas comprising Mongolia, Tibet, and Chinese Turkestan, although occupying more space than China proper, were administrated by a quite different type of governmental system.

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Political subdivisions of the Chinese Empire such as Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan and Tibet were usually referred to as dependencies. This is however an inaccurate translation of the Chinese term "fan," which really means "the barbarian west." Since the cultural, ethnic and historical background in these areas was very different from the rest of the Empire, these regions required, and in practice had, a very particular type of governmental control. All these frontier territories were administered by the "Department of Dependencies" in Peking. This department was subdivided into the following bureaus:

a. Inner Mongolian bureau, that administered frontier boundaries, titles of nobility, appointment of officials, military affairs, league conferences, and finally organization of banner units of Inner Mongolia.

b. "Reception bureau" for Inner Mongolia nobility, that was responsible for the payments and allowances to the Inner Mongolian aristocracy.

c. Eastern Turkestan bureau, that was in charge of Moslem affairs in Eastern Turkestan.

175 the Soviet economic stake in Sinkiang.
648 Over the next years, the strength of the Chinese Communist
668 government increased within the Soviet-Chinese relationship. The treaty of 1950, concluded by Mao Tse-tung in Moscow after lengthy haggling, was replaced in December 1954 by a new treaty concluded at the occasion of a visit of Krushchev and Mikoyan in Peking. Among other concessions, this new treaty provided for the liquidation of the Soviet shares in the former joint stock companies. Nevertheless some element of Soviet control remained since the Soviet shares were to be repaid through deliveries of raw materials and other commodities from Turkestan. The whole industrial and communications development of the province which was to be rapidly expanded under the Chinese Communist Five Year Plans depended also on Soviet economic and technical assistance. Most important, Soviet Russia has reportedly kept possession of the atomic energy center at Mirgrad in the T kla Makan Desert and has through the maintenance of military forces full control over the exploitation of uranium deposts in the Altai region where a large number ofRussians, estimated by one observer to be as large as 80,000, has been reported.

648 On the other hand, a recent British correspondent (New York
668 Times, August 13, 1956, p. 9) has reported that throughout the region "up to the Soviet borders, the direct control of the Central Government on development plans and on political life is everywhere apparent. There are Soviet advisers and experts and plenty of Soviet machinery, but no more than in other parts of China, and the over-riding impression is that China is in complete charge.

"Peking's orders stretch into the remotest villages, where the ever-present cadres and Party members are kept in constant touch with the capital through provincial committees. Nowhere is there any external evidence ofSoviet influence outside the technical sphere."

This observation of a Chinese Communist administration directed from Peking does not necessarily exclude consideration of Russian military and economic decisions for Sinkiang by the Chinese policy-makers in Peking. Nor does it exclude the possibility of conflict in the districtuion of the Turkestan resources between the Soviet and Chinese Communist economies, especially in the case of the uranium exploitation at present obviously in Soviet hands. The railroad from Lanchow to Aktogai in Russian
• [496] Turkestan, which in 1956 has been pushed beyond the Yumen oil fields in Kansu, is the most important physical link between the two economies but is also a highway for a vast and growing stream of young Chinese immigrants who are brought in to work on the oil fields, the railroads, and the construction of new towns and factories. This movement, which is aimed at filling up the

648 thinly populated area with a Chinese population, is the most
668 important factor in the reassertion of Chinese control. The Chinese link with Turkestan is also not limited to the railroad under construction which will run along the old caravan route via Qomul, Urumchi, to the Soviet border. In addition the
[491] Chinese Communists follow the policy of the National Government
[496] in the construction of road and railroad connections through the Tsaidam Basin. This area is reportedly also to be developed by Communist China into a new key industrial center in central Asia. Oil and mineral resources are claimed to exist in abundance. The Tsaidam region is farther away from the Soviet or Outer Mongolian border than is the main railroad line and it provides a position in depth in the Chinese Communist connection with Sinkiang. In its advance into central Asia, the Chinese Communist regime seems to follow the main strategic considerations which had been observed by previous Chinese governments

With the shrinking distances and the means of modern industrial development, the importance of Sinkiang with its rich natural resources has vastly increased. There is at the moment no indication of any hitch in the Soviek-Chinese cooperation in the province. But should any conflict evolve between these Communist organizations, Sinkiang must, by the very reason of its geographic location and economic importance, become one of the decisive areas of conflict.

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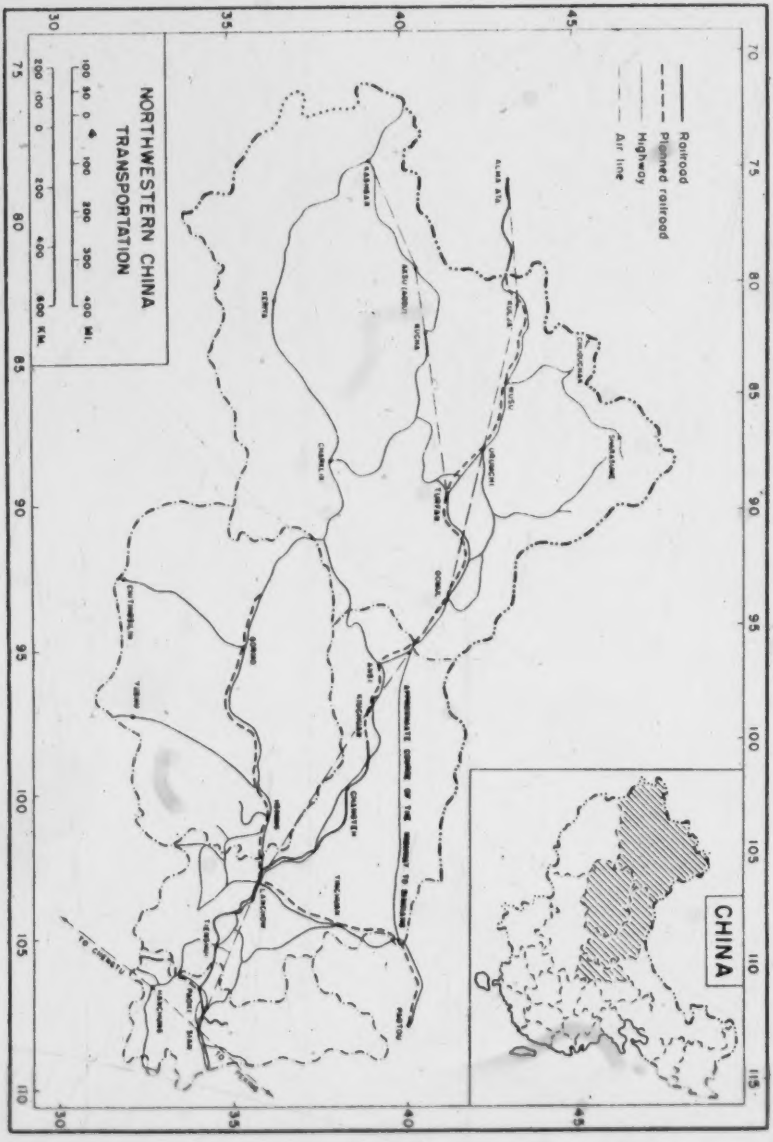

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